

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 22, 2011

**Statement by the President on the Earthquake in New Zealand**

On behalf of the American people, Michelle and I extend our deepest condolences to the people of New Zealand and to the families and friends of the victims in Christchurch, which has suffered its second major earthquake in just six months. Our thoughts and prayers are with all those whose lives have been touched by this tragedy, especially as they search for their loved ones and work to recover from this disaster. The United States is a close friend and partner of New Zealand, as evidenced by the meeting of the U.S.-New Zealand Partnership Forum that was underway in Christchurch when the earthquake struck. To assist in the rescue and recovery efforts, we have agreed to deploy a U.S. Agency for International Development Disaster Assistance Response Team, including an Urban Search and Rescue Team, and we stand ready to provide more assistance as needed. As our New Zealand friends move forward, may they find some comfort and strength in knowing that they will have the enduring friendship and support of many partners around the world, including the United States.

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